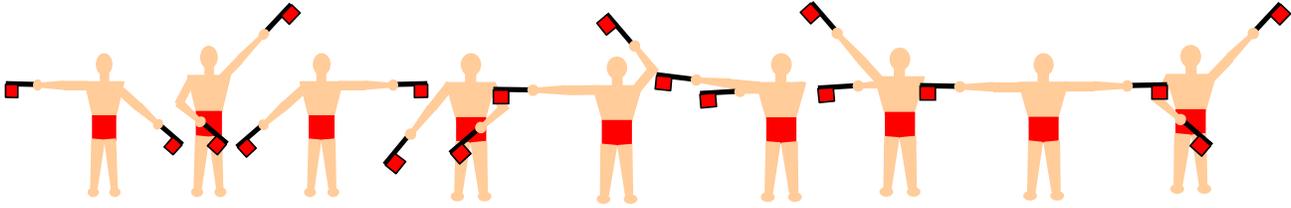


Ocean City Beach Patrol



Edition 58

Newsletter

Fall 2014/Winter 2015



Over Eighty Years
of Saving Lives

Maintain Your Role
in this Fantastic
Tradition!

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Message From the Captain

A Summer of Tragedy and Triumph!

After 42 seasons with the Beach Patrol, I can tell you that the summer of 2014 will be remembered as one of the most unusual in our history. We experienced many changes and had numerous triumphs, but unfortunately we also experienced multiple tragic events. However, when I review the entire season and all of the Beach Patrol's operations I must still declare the season a success. Some may question, "how could that be?" But I have stated year after year, that if we only consider a year without any serious events a success, then we are devaluing the great work done every day by all of our personnel. The ocean is a dynamic, ever-changing environment and in spite of our best efforts, tragedy will strike again, even as we continue to do everything in our power to prevent it and we work hard to carry out each aspect of our mission every day.

A season in review...

- Although we celebrated the retirement of Tom Shuster as the Director of Recreation and Parks, it was also an uncertain time for the Patrol, not knowing who our new Director would be. I was so very pleased to see Susan Petito appointed as the new Director but it was also an opportunity for the City Manager to make changes and to reorganize the Recreation Department. The Beach Patrol became a major part of that reorganization as we were moved from Recreation and Parks to become a division of Emergency Services. I had to agree that from most peoples' perspectives, the Beach Patrol is viewed as an agency with more of a public safety mission than one of a recreation focus. With the change in departments also came a new Director, Joseph Theobald. Based on my previous interactions with Joe, his integrity, and what I knew to be his strengths, I was excited by this new op-

portunity for the Patrol.

This change occurred three weeks before the start of our 2014 season which meant a steep learning curve for our new Director and some challenges for our leadership.

- However, thanks to Joe's leadership style we were able to move forward without any major disruption. Joe spent the season getting an up-close understanding of how the Beach Patrol functions as a town agency and as a division of Emergency Services. Although I had worked with Joe before, I never had an opportunity to get to know him on a personal level until this past season and I enjoy this new relationship.
- Becoming part of Emergency Services allowed our Beach Patrol dispatching responsibilities to come in-line with other public safety departments and saw each of our Sergeants spend several days training at the Ocean City Communications center. The lessons learned and the modified procedures will be the basis for next season's Beach Patrol communications plan.
- We also saw an unexpected change in the leadership of our Surf Rescue Academy (SRA) since Jamie Falcon's announcement during March's Strategic Planning meeting that he would be unavailable due to his political campaign for Maryland House of Delegates. Thanks to Mark Muller's willingness to take over coordination of the SRA, his planning skills and his experience as a professor at SU, this year's SRA was a huge success. This year's crop of rookies was well prepared for the job, and delivered exceptional performance. This successful change was only possible because of the method the Patrol uses to develop programs and future leaders, and the fact that SRA already had a well-established foundation. Training of our new personnel to carry on the mission of the



Patrol is critical and, thanks to Jamie Falcon and Tim Uebel who have led it for the past several years, our SRA has a well-defined formula for success. Although this change was not anticipated, it was an opportunity to split the responsibilities for training between SRA for new employees and Veteran Recertification for returning employees. The feedback from Veteran re-cert was fantastic and serves as a testament to Tim's knowledge, professionalism and the respect that he has earned from all SRTs.

- Our international reputation was highlighted when we were asked to host the head of the Rio De Janeiro Beach Patrol, Coronel José Andrade, so that he could participate in our Surf Rescue Academy and take some of our training and procedures back to Brazil to benefit their local lifeguards.
- Another change that impacted our success in a positive way was the change in crew leadership that saw us appoint 7 new Crew Chiefs and 14 first time Assistant Crew Chiefs who consistently performed beyond expectations. The ability of the organization to fill vacant leadership positions with quality, well-prepared replacements is an attribute that happens by design and not by accident. The Assistant Crew Chief training position gives us a chance to prepare and evaluate future leaders and increases our chances for a successful transition from season to season.
- Even before the season began we felt the impact of a harsh winter which caused many school systems and colleges to extend their school years further into the summer. This delayed the arrival of many of our students and educators. Thanks to the scheduling magic of Mike Stone we were able to cover the beach and fulfill all of the other responsibilities that the Patrol has made to support Town-sponsored events.
- An historic event was in its final planning stages with the guidance and leading of City Engineer Terry McGean, as we prepared to have a new Beach Patrol headquarters for the 2015 season. The Beach Patrol leadership had several meetings with the architects and construction management team and was able to make design changes that assures our new facility will function well for our programs and our organization. All suggested modifications were included in the final design and the construction began on the first possible day, Monday, September 15, 2014 with the official groundbreaking. The ceremony was well attended by local government officials, OCDC board members, as well as many supporters of the OCBP. The Beach Patrol held a second groundbreaking on Sunday, September 21st following the final weekly meeting of the 2014 season and had several dozen of our employees participate.
- Although our overall statistics for this past season were higher than in 2013, they were average for most years. What made this season appear more active was that in 2013 we were guarding "Lake Atlantic" for most of the year. With the lack of big surf, we had fewer rips. With fewer rips, there were very few incidents or rescues. The conditions during this past season assured that everyone was able to get several seasons worth of experience during this single summer and this will provide a more seasoned and better prepared returning staff for 2015.
- I received more complimentary letters of support and commendation than any previous season, which is confirmation that the public has not only noticed firsthand the value of the Patrol and its training and professionalism, but has taken the time to share their feelings. I used these letters of support and admiration to begin a new outreach called "Thank You Thursday", which highlights the great works of our dedicated em-

ployees on our official Facebook site.

- Throughout the season Joe continually told me how impressed he was with the quality and professionalism of the Patrol and the individuals who have dedicated themselves to our mission and purpose. After several months of observing our operations and asking questions, he also told me that he came to realize that educating the public is a much more important aspect of our operation and overall mission than he had previously realized, and that most people not connected with our operation just do not understand that and take it for granted.
- We continued the most important aspect of our mission, which is education, and had incredible support of the editors of the local press and publications.
- We also cannot forget about our Junior Beach Patrol program which once again set records for the number of participants and the number returning at levels 2 and above. Once again during the testing for the JBPAT positions these younger candidates were passing with performances that not only exceeded the requirements for the JBPAT position, but also met the requirements for SRT although they are not old enough to take one of those positions. These are our future leaders.
- We received a visit from an internationally known expert in rip-currents from Australia, Dr. Rob Brander (AKA Dr. Rip), who is a coastal geomorphologist and Senior Lecturer at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia. Dr. Rip was on a world-wide tour of beaches that have rip current activity and specifically asked to visit Ocean City, Maryland. He requested this primarily because of our educational outreach programs, which Dr. Rip has declared the most comprehensive and effective that he is aware of anywhere in the world. Once again your Ocean City Beach Patrol is a leader, not only in the area of educational outreach, but their assistance in scientific research of ocean hazards is also well documented.
- I cannot look back at the 2014 season without thinking about the individuals and the families of those who perished as a result of water related activities. However, in my position I must look at each incident and evaluate how the Beach Patrol performed and what, if anything we could have done differently that may have altered the outcome. I can state without hesitation that all of the personnel involved in each incident performed as trained and expected.
- Although the outcome was not always what we desire, the performance of the staff involved was exceptional. In three cases we were involved in a search and recovery for a submerged victim and in each case we were able to make a successful recovery within a time-frame that gave the victim a chance for resuscitation, although medically they did not recover. My experience with dozens of submerged victims throughout my 42 years only convinces me that our training and the commitment of our staff is exceptional since in about 75% of cases we do not recover the victim until after 24 hours.
- Although we were involved in far too many tragedies that occurred as a result of water based activities, for the great majority of our visitors we were critical in assuring that they had a successful experience on our beaches. To the family who had their lost 4 year old daughter returned safe and sound; they know the significance of a well-functioning Beach Patrol. To the father who along with his son was rescued by a mobile patrol a week after we went off duty; his life will never be the same and he will never look at a life-

guard or the ocean in the same way.

- We continue to have the total and full support of the Mayor and City Council even though we had several serious incidents while on duty.

In summary, another indicator that I look at for a successful season is how our personnel did with the high expectations that we hold ourselves to. I can tell you that we had very few personnel incidents last season when compared to an average year. This has to do with the examples that you are setting for each other. Although we will never forget the summer of 2014 we must focus on the upcoming 2015 season. We have already tested and given appointments to the 2015 SRAs to some amazing candidates. Like these newest rookies, many of you came to the Patrol seeking purpose and significance in your life. Last summer, most of you learned what it really meant to make a difference in this world for the benefit of others. You are forever significant in the lives and families you have touched, just by doing your job!!!!

Make sure you're a part of the adventure in 2015 when we move into our new headquarters and experience an additional week of our summer season.

Dear colleagues,

Welcome to the Emergency Services Department and your first winter season as public safety personnel. This summer was met with challenges, transitions and tragedies, yet you defeated each obstacle and continued to rise to the occasion to serve the Ocean City community.



As we plan and prepare for the 2015 season, I am excited for new changes and new beginnings. To start, our new building, located on Talbot Street & Philadelphia Ave, boasts three stories and 10,000 square feet for us to call home next summer. In addition, I expect to implement changes throughout the year that will further incorporate the role of the OCBP as a public safety discipline.

The future of the Ocean City Beach Patrol is bright and I am proud that I have the opportunity to lead a division whose hard work and commitment has made us a visible leader in this great nation. Thank you all for what you do!

Joseph J. Theobald
Director of Emergency Services
Town of Ocean City



Welcome Rookie Class of 2015

I want to again welcome you into the Beach Patrol family and to the greatest adventure of your life and I hope that this is just the beginning of a lifetime of wonderful Ocean City memories. Although you have taken the preliminary and most important steps toward a

career with the Ocean City Beach Patrol when you successfully completed the pre-employment physical skills test and demonstrated to your testing administrators that you have the "Right Stuff", this is just the beginning of the adventure and not the

end. Passing the "test" is a challenge you will always remember with great pride, but now the real work begins for you and the Surf Rescue Academy instructors and the Patrol's leadership.

Although official offers of appointment to Surf Rescue Academy will not happen until April 2015, I will be sending you a link by e-mail in early February, to a Google Docs form that will update your status and help the patrol with planning. Once you receive the official offer in April and have confirmed your availability and submitted official documentation, your responsibility is to be fully prepared for the rigors of SRA and ready to perform at the highest level both physically and mentally. As long as your availability is until at least Labor Day, Monday, September 7, 2015 you will be guaranteed a reserved slot in a Surf Rescue Academy, however, several appointments will also be given to others based on performance, past connection with the Patrol and late season availability if prior to Labor day. We have added an off-site test on Saturday, February 28, 2015 at York College in Pennsylvania and will be looking for additional rookies for the 2015 season. Now that you are a part of our family you have a shared responsibility to help recruit quality candidates that you would like to work with this summer.

We have the responsibility of turning you into a Surf Rescue Technician and you have the responsibility of arriving in the spring ready to take on the challenges of Surf Rescue Academy. We will provide you with the most comprehensive open water surf rescue training being taught by the best instructors available anywhere. To be successful you must use these next several months to prepare both personally and physically for the "Greatest Adventure of your life." To prepare physically you must continue to work on maintaining and improving your physical conditioning and specific skills. Although we talked about where you needed to improve during your final interview you should take time to look at our training web resources www.ococean.com/ocbp and contact our coordinator of training, Sgt. Muller for training tips. Although it may be difficult to find a pool to train in during the winter and running in the sand may only be possible at the beach, you MUST find a way to maintain your training and increase the intensity as you approach the start of SRA. Reporting to SRA out of shape or not prepared to participate at the physical level required of all rookies, will result in the loss of your position. To prepare personally you need to finalize all of your living arrangements as soon as possible. You may contact current members of the patrol through Facebook or e-mail me ocbp@ococean.com and I will put you in contact with resources to find housing which includes available employee housing. Do any or all of these things but whatever you do..... you must be ready! And remember... This is the beginning of the greatest adventure of your life.

OCBPSRA Certification

The following individuals currently have SRT-II (old Basic) certification and are eligible to apply for the training position of Assistant Crew Chief for the first time. SRTs who have previously served in the role of ACC can apply for the position again, however it is the desire of the patrol to have 17 first-time ACCs to allow more individuals to receive this additional training. The Assistant Crew Chief training position is a critical step

(Continued on page 4)

(OCBPSRA Cert continued from page 3)

in the process of developing a strong leadership succession candidate pool. It allows the Beach Patrol leadership to observe and evaluate your future potential based on criteria referenced performance of the essential Crew Chief tasks. Note: There are several SRTs who have completed all the criteria to receive SRT II certification, except the additional required NIMS courses. You may complete these courses at any time and your certification will be updated.

Gray, William (08/12/2014)

Jackson, Tim (05/01/2014)

King, Andrew (08/10/2012)

Lagace', Lucie (06/22/2012)

Leszczynski, Robert (08/14/2013)

McElvaney, Patrick (08/19/2010)

McIntyre, Meghan (08/21/2010)

Neumann, Shane (07/23/2008)

Reed, Kevin (09/25/2011)

Sears, Jarred (08/25/2011)

Stang, Jack (08/17/2013)



The following individuals have earned the SRT-III (old Advanced) certification and are eligible to apply for promotion to Crew Chief. All SRT-IIIs have previously served in the training position of Assistant Crew Chief and may re-apply for that position as well as that of Crew Chief since there are always far less openings at the CC position compared to the 17 annual openings at ACC. At this time I am not aware of any openings for Crew Chief for the 2015 season. However, you are still asked to indicate your desire to apply when you return your preliminary intent form through Google Docs in February as well as in your return employment agreement in April. If any opening exists you will be asked to complete an application that will be reviewed by the selection committee in early May with offers made prior to Surf Rescue Academy I. Note: There are several SRTs who have completed all the criteria to receive SRT III certification, except the additional required NIMS courses. You may complete these courses at any time and your certification will be updated.

Bangert, Michael (07/10/2000)

Devine, Richard (07/07/2011)

Foy, Jacob (07/30/2001)

Fraleay, Philip (06/15/2009)

Krabbe, David (08/21/2012)

Linnell, Kalani (08/12/2010)

Mechling, Thomas (08/10/2013)

Miller, John (07/03/2009)

Neumann, Shane (08/24/2009)

Ouellet, Emmanuelle (06/18/2012)

Smith, Arthur (06/18/2010)

Stokes, Dustin (07/12/2004)

Vassalotti, Paul (05/25/2013)

Wilder, Joshua (06/02/2013)

Wilkinson, Jr., William (07/07/2011)



Captain's Note: You should have received a review of your OCBPSRA certification record by e-mail. Make sure you verify the accuracy of your record and use the link at the bottom of the form to respond to Google Docs. A list of SRTs who have OCBPSRA SRT II certification and have not held the

training position of ACC and non-Crew Chiefs who have achieved SRT III certification is included in this newsletter. SRT II is required to apply for Assistant Crew Chief and SRT III is required to be an applicant for Crew Chief.

Testing and Recruiting

The State of Recruiting and Testing 2014

submitted by: Lt. Skip Lee

With literally years and years of data and experience behind us, the recruiting and testing campaign is well established within the Ocean City Beach Patrol. Recently, the elevation of the crew chief's role in the overall process has proven to be the most significant improvement I can recall. Their consistent and professional contributions to the preparation and evaluation process continue to raise the bar, and the efforts in the summer of 2014 were no exception. From the moment Captain greets the candidates at the boardwalk to the last handshake and offer of appointment to Surf Rescue Academy at headquarters, the testing process is designed and carried out to provide potential employees with a clear demonstration of what their future holds; and the crew chief takes on a major part in that process.

Thank you Crew Chiefs. Your time, effort and excellence in the process is greatly appreciated!

Never before in Beach Patrol history have we had so many recruits register for Beach Patrol's Pre-Employment Physical Skills Evaluations (PEPSEs). At one point this summer, there were over 120 candidates signed up to take our June test and we had similar numbers for the two August tests. The challenge, as we all know, is not recruiting them – our internet presence and word of mouth efforts are very effective in informing potential candidates about Beach Patrol opportunities – it is actually getting them to show up and take the test. On two occasions this summer, we were expecting record-breaking numbers at our tests. We scheduled to handle the masses. We prepared the responsibilities of each testing officer to handle the anticipated numbers. We made sure the check-in, paperwork, and verification process was streamlined to handle big crowds. We even redesigned the staging of the test components in order not to give either the first or the last testing group any advantage over the other. In the end, though, it wasn't necessary. The very best showed up and we hired them! The rest stayed home and ate Fruit Loops and watched Sponge-Bob.

So, we find ourselves with another GREAT OPPORTUNITY this winter. Since the Beach Patrol's lifeblood is new-hires and since the mandate from the town is to staff the beach with the most highly qualified, well-equipped beach patrol possible, we will need to hold a winter test. Our plans are to return to our most successful, most efficient testing location of all time, York College of Pennsylvania, and hold an offsite PEPSE on February 28th, 2015 at 11:00am for the purpose of increasing our Surf Rescue Academy numbers for the summer of 2015. Mike Stone and Mark Muller are looking for at least 25 candidates to enroll in the May 17th SRA to best support the needs of the patrol. From a scheduling perspective and for obvious reasons, Mike would like to start the season with more rookies to fill the anticipated positions in the schedule that had to be creatively filled this summer. From a training and teaching perspective, Mark would like to maximize his resources and

time efficiency to provide the best possible preparation for new SRTs while utilizing the available staff early in the season. More P-SRTs early in the season make sense for everyone.

To help in this effort, we would ask that you continue to share your beach patrol stories and the Beach Patrol job opportunity with friends and acquaintances. If you have a venue to distribute information or know of a group who would benefit from you providing them with information, I encourage you to reach out to Lt. Kovacs at HQ and request recruiting brochures and beach safety literature be sent to you wherever you are. You don't have to be in Ocean City to get these supplies. We will send them to you! It has been and will remain that our current and past employees are our most effective and efficient recruiter. To that end, we want to support you and empower you with whatever you need to move the mission of the beach patrol ahead, even when you are not sitting the stand. For all you do each and every day during the summer and throughout the year, I just want to say thank you. The recruiting campaign involves everyone. Let us know what you need and we'll try to get it to you.

Oh, and one last note – pending the outcome of the York test, we may hold an additional PEPSE at another location. We are focusing solely on the York test for the time being but understand that the needs of the Beach Patrol and the challenges that lie ahead call for there to be contingency plans at all times. More information about that should the need present itself. Thank You.

Crew Comps 2014 Changing of the Guard

submitted by: Lt. Mike Stone

Where were you on the evening of July 26th, 2014 at 6:30 pm? I hope you were on the beach at North Division St. with me enjoying the Ocean City Beach Patrol's annual Crew Competition (and not stuck in traffic due to the Rt. 50 drawbridge). If you were not there you missed out on a great evening of competition and fun!



The overall winner of Crew Comps this past summer was Crew 1 from the South. They defeated the two time defending champions from the Middle North, Crew 12 (CC DeKemper, Summers 2012 & 2013). CC Kevin Johnson and ACC Manu Ouellet, along with their well-balanced team of both rookies & veterans, were able to rise above all other challengers. The other members of Crew 1 are as follows: George Buchman, Sam Duhaime-Morisette, Will Gray, John Miller, Tyler Mitchell, Jon Rothermel, and Yannick Stein-Tremblay. They secured first place with a score of 41 points. Tied for second place with 33 points were Crew 9 & Crew 17. Crew 9 was led by CC Jake Ritter and ACC Andrew Douglas and Crew 17 was led by CC Charlie Swartz and ACC Karen Hessler.

I wish I could mention every crew but that would take half the newsletter. I will, however, mention the winners of each event. They are as follows:

Run Swim Run

1st Crew 1

2nd Crew 9
3rd Crew 17

Land Line

1st Crew 1
2nd Crew 12
3rd Crew 8

Soft Sand Relay

1st Crew 17
2nd Crew 6
3rd Crew 9

Paddle Board Relay

1st Crew 7
2nd Crew 9
3rd Crew 1

Tug of War

1st Crew 2
2nd Crew 5
3rd Crew 1



There were many close races and it was incredible to look at the actual times of the double-heat races on the stopwatches. That just shows the level of fitness and hard work put in by each and every crew to maintain their physical conditioning. I also have to thank the Sergeants, Captain Arbin & 1st Lt. Lee for all of their hard work. Sgt. Uebel, Sgt. Weingard and Lt. Kovacs were also out there on Jet Ski duty and often miss all of the fun. I should also thank Joan Holthaus, Ava Krivosh from JBP, & Cat from Lucky Surf Shop for their help in running the OCBPSRA store. The highlight of the evening for me though, is watching the final event as Captain Arbin runs the Tug of War (Crew 2 won and Crew 1 was third)! We will see who defends their titles next year as crews begin to take shape and as the fun, yet tough workouts are implemented. Crew Comps is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, July 25th, 2015 at 6:30 pm. The location is to be determined but will hopefully be at North Division St. again in front of Quiet Storm Surf Shop. For now though, Crew 1 of the South is the reigning champion after finishing in second place two summers ago. They will have the honor of flying the Crew Comps Champions flag. If Sergeants McVey, Uebel, & Weingard have their way, the flag will stay in the South Area though! Congratulations to all who helped or participated, in any way, to make the event such a success!

Captain's Note: Not only is Crew Comps an annual event that gives our supporters a chance to come out and cheer on their favorite crew (usually from their beach), but it also encourages teamwork and builds synergy among crew members. Like all competitive events that we sponsor or participate in it encourages our employees to work out and sharpen skills that will be used in the daily performance of their duties. In addition to being our annual Crew Competition this year's event was also part of Beach Patrol appreciation day as proclaimed by the Ocean City Mayor and City Council at the suggestion of a local citizen who wrote a letter to the Mayor in the spring. It was also the inaugural event attended by a newly formed group of community supporters who are calling themselves, "Friends of the Ocean City Beach Patrol". We are thankful to all who support the Beach Patrol and those who have served as members.

INFORMATION

Sergeant Evaluation Process

submitted by: Lt. Skip Lee

– A new initiative to track and document the many accomplishments of our Sergeant Rank

As everyone knows, the Beach Patrol's leadership finds its foundation in the field of education. Captain Craig was a teacher in St. Louis, MO. and started his tenure as Captain in 1938. Captain Schoepf was a teacher in Wicomico County and started his tenure as Captain in 1986. And Captain Arbin is a teacher in Charles County. He became Captain in 1997. With all of this education experience supporting the Patrol's leadership, it is no wonder that there is so much emphasis, both implied and literal, on formative and summative evaluation. The Beach Patrol's evaluation process is outstanding and leaves no question among any employee as to their development status. This goes for the first year P-SRT who is evaluated weekly as part of their on-going learning and the 20th year Crew Chief who receives a mid-summer and end of year evaluation to document and monitor performance.

The one area where the Beach Patrol felt it could improve in terms of its evaluation system was that of the Sergeant. The Sergeants run the daily operations of the beach patrol. They handle everything that happens on the beach and are outstanding at their job. There is no question about that. Being the reflective organization that it is, the Beach Patrol decided to use the agenda at the annual Strategic Planning Weekend last winter to focus on the improvement of the process by which Sergeants were evaluated and established time to consider many models to govern this initiative. In the end, the decision was to adopt one that took into consideration the Professional Practices that ALL Sergeants are expected to engage in throughout the summer while at the same time, consider the many unique qualities and attributes each of them brings to the leadership table. In the end, a 50/50 model divided between Professional Practices and Summer Goals and Objectives was adopted and piloted during the summer of 2014.

Sergeants were provided with a document that clearly outlined their roles and responsibilities (as decided by the Lieutenants with Sergeant input) at the beginning of the summer and tasked with documenting experiences and collecting artifacts that demonstrated their completion of the criteria contained in the evaluation model. They were also tasked with identifying two specific and measurable goals that they planned to see through during the summer of 2014 and charged with documenting their progress towards completion; once in July and then again as part of a post season conversation with the Lieutenants. This second section of the evaluation process focused specifically on two distinct components: the first was a patrol-wide goal where their time and effort impacted the performance of the organization. The second



was an area or personnel goal that impacted the performance and efficiency of their assigned area. It had to be people-related, not a process.

A third component, and possibly the most significant part of the evaluation process, was the opportunity for the Sergeants to interview with a Lieutenant to discuss the many behind the scenes efforts and initiatives that happen during the summer that may go unnoticed from Dorchester Street. It was in this time that the Sergeants were afforded the opportunity to share short cycle victories, have accomplishments documented and to communicate seasonal successes. The one thing I know to be true of the Sergeant rank is that they are not a group that goes around tooting their own horns. When a success is reached, they all, in concert, celebrate the accomplishment and move on not looking to be in the spotlight or seeking recognition. This year's evaluation process afforded them the opportunity to have some of those events become parts of their personnel files.

It will be interesting to re-visit the process again this winter at the Strategic Planning Weekend and collect the feedback from the Sergeant ranks. I foresee there being recommendations from those involved to improve the process and look forward to those conversations. In the end, it is my hope that the pilot-program filled an overdue void in the global evaluation process and that the beach patrol is an even better organization today because of the efforts and initiatives the sergeants took to identify goals, see those goals through fruition and conduct themselves and their professional behaviors in such a way that it served to move the entire organization forward. Thank you, Sergeants, for your time and for all you do for the Beach Patrol!

Captain's Note: Reflection and evaluation is how organizations and the individuals who make up that organization continue to grow and improve. This latest tool that First Lieutenant Lee has developed and implemented is a quality, well-designed evaluation instrument that will serve the patrol's leadership well. I want to personally thank Skip for his tireless efforts in seeing this massive task to comple

Stands Stands Stands

submitted by: Lt. Skip Lee

In the spring 2014 edition of the Semaphore Newsletter, I shared the efforts of the town to prepare for the annual challenge we have with respect to keeping stands up and out on the beach. My oh my, what a difference a year makes. Call it preparation. Call it luck. Call it whatever you want but the Beach Patrol is in such a better position now than at any other time with respect to guard stands. We cannot thank the Public Works Carpentry division enough for their tireless support and dedication to the beach patrol's weekly need to have stands repaired throughout the summer and constructed during the winter. We cannot thank Dave Haight and his painting team and Tim Uebel and his painting team enough for their tremendous effort in the fall as they inventoried, prepared, and painted the 120 or so guard stands it takes to equip the beach patrol on an annual basis. Couple the work the teams completed with the new winter under-cover storage facility



where the majority of our stands are housed and the days of frequently rotting and broken stands may be behind us. I hope I am not jinxing us for the summer of 2015 but the place we are today is so much better than ever before, and we have the Public Works Department and the extended patrollers to thank for that! (Of course, this does not factor in the challenges we face with the annual visitors in the month of June. I guess we'll have to see how that goes each year but the summer of 2014 showed lower than usual incidents of stand damage.)

Captain's Note: I believe that two other factors that have contributed to the recent success in reducing damage to our stands once they are deployed on the beach are the Ocean City Police patrols that have been enhanced by the use of our ATV's overnight and each SRT's commitment to pulling the stands to the rear of the beach and carefully moving them each day.

Watercraft Duty in 2015

Submitted by Kristin Josen

Watercraft duty is a fun way to spend the workday with the OCBP and now is the perfect time to take your safe boater's course so you can make it a part of your 2015 summer. You can take the course online now and be ready for Jet Drive training and certification at the beginning of this summer season (check the employee calendar on-line for scheduled Jet Drive trainings). In the State of Maryland, you are required to have completed a safe boater's course prior to operating a motor vessel.

You have two options to complete this requirement:

Find a course near you: <http://dnrweb.dnr.state.md.us/nrp/boatingclass.html>

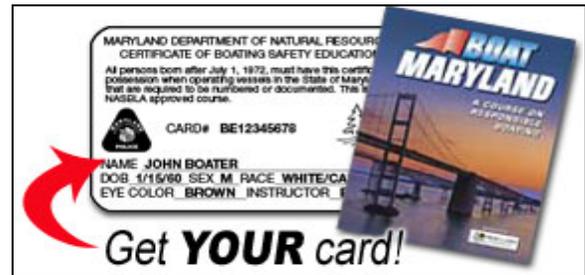
Take the course online: <http://www.boat-ed.com/maryland/> or (Google "safe boater's course" in Maryland) This course costs \$29.50



Boat Ed's (boat-ed.com) Maryland online course has the same boating safety content as the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) classroom course. This course is Maryland DNR Approved. Registration is free and you pay only if you pass. It is a 3.5 hour course that you complete at your own pace over time.

Complete the course at a location near you or online, and bring your card with you at check-in. Get it done, start the course today, so you too can have Rescue Craft duty this summer!

Captain's note: If you obtain any certifications related to your position with the patrol send a copy to Beach Patrol so we can add those certifications to your OCBPSRA record and your personnel file. In addition to a Safe Boater's Certification, we would also like to have copies of any water safety certifications, SCUBA as well as emergency medical certifications. An updated copy of your OCBPSRA record was e-mailed to you on November 22, 2014. On it, we asked for a confirmation of its accuracy. If we are missing information it is your responsibility to make us aware so we can do any necessary research and correct your record, before you apply for a position or attend any specialty certifications.



Thank You Thursday

submitted by: Kristin Josen



The Beach Patrol has started a new public outreach venue on our official Facebook page. We are calling it "Thank You Thursday" and it features a weekly posting of an "atta-boy" that Captain Arbin has received complimenting the Beach Patrol. We thought this would be a good way to keep a Facebook presence in the "off-season" when the public is less aware of the Patrol.

Lt. Kovacs has been doing a great job and enjoys putting the Thank You Thursdays together with a picture and a safety message. We have enough to post each week until we are back in season next May. We do not post without the permission of the person who sent it. Captain Arbin has been working diligently to get the emails approved for the public to read on our Facebook page. So far everyone that he has asked has given a very positive response and said "YES" please post it. The comments and "likes" from those who have viewed them on Facebook have been overwhelmingly positive and has generated many additional complimentary comments that are posted as well as

people re-sharing it to others.

This seems to be the perfect venue to share the gratitude from beach patrons. It lets the public know the many great things our lifeguards do on a daily basis and it gives credit and recognition at the same time. Another important feature is that we highlight a safety tip that goes along with the Thank You Thursday. With the new Thursday feature we have seen a wonderful response to the posts and many people are choosing to share the post which brings an increased amount of traffic to the Beach Patrol Facebook page.

As more and more people are drawn to our page we have a great opportunity to further our mission of educating and informing the public about beach safety. If you have not visited our Facebook page, check it out and keep looking for "Thank you Thursdays." You may be the next SRT featured or a member of a crew that has received a group commendation (We featured two crews the first two weeks in November)! We hope you enjoy this new outreach and help us spread the word about "Thank You Thursday" and the most important aspect of our mission, education!



Greetings

submitted by: Sgt. Tim Uebel



As fall approaches, and we turn the clocks back for Daylight Savings Time, summer doesn't want to go away. The weather in Ocean City, as of the second week in November, had temperatures in the 60s & 70s (although as this is being written we are experiencing record cold). As we reflect on the past season, we realize that our Beach Patrol is going through some changes. The strength of an organization, is the ability to adapt to changes in a positive way. I believe the summer season of 2014 was a successful season, with many lessons learned. Although there were some unfortunate events, we as an organization should reflect on the entire season and overall statistics.

The 2014 summer season started with heavy surf. Every guard's skills, rookies & veterans, were tested early. The summer was mixed with some "lake-Atlantic" days and some days where the ocean conditions were extremely hazardous. The days when the Beach Patrol was busy, total rescues reached from 100 to over 300 per day. As you think of the "big picture", visitors to the resort's beaches totaled over 3,000,000. The number of serious and unfortunate events only reflects a very small percentage (although, even one is more than we would like). These events affect our employees and they grieve the losses also. The lesson learned should be to spread the message of open water safety and also to stress the importance of learning how to swim, again demonstrating the importance of education.

Thanks to all veterans, who were prepared for the swim and run. Every veteran passed the run and swim in the same day, which has not been the case in past seasons. Thanks to the OCEMS personnel who participated and provided valuable skills information during our combined training sessions. Hopefully veteran recertification was helpful and fun for all participants. If anyone has any ideas for different modules or skill review for veteran recertification 2015, please forward them to Sgt. Uebel.

The fall season, after Labor Day, saw personnel numbers decrease to 26 to 45 employees. Weather remained seasonably warm and there were many visitors still flocking to the beach and ocean. On two separate days after Labor Day with 26 stands deployed along the beach, we performed 338 rescues and 135 rescues. Everyone performed excellent and it was exciting to see the synergy between the Beach Patrol, Ocean City Communications and OCEMS. Then there was "Big Wednesday", 9/17/2014, a day that I personally will not forget. Hurricane Edouard passing offshore, partly sunny, air temp in the 70s, water temp 70 degrees, wave heights 5 to 8 feet, and big rip

currents. The 26 stands along with support from Mobile Rescue Units (quads) were busy performing EDUs and preventive actions. A moderate amount of rescues were being initiated during the day. Then at approximately 12:30 hrs a rescue call was radioed from 21st St., as the guard entered the ocean near 19th St. backup coverage was already in route. The rescue was initiated in waste deep water, but by the time other covering guards made contact, the rescue was now approximately 250 yards offshore. The strategic decision was made, that in order to ensure the safety and well-being of all those involved, including the distressed subjects, a paddle board would be utilized. While attempting to paddle out, I observed two of the subjects being assisted safely to shore by the covering backup guards. However, one subject who appeared unconscious was still being attended to, many yards offshore. The time critical and urgent attempt to reach the victim by paddle board was successful. Rescuers provided continual patient care on the paddle board, while navigating the hazardous ocean conditions until successfully transferring patient care to awaiting EMS paramedics. Unfortunately the patient did not survive his underlying medical condition. Reflecting back to that incident, the synergy between the rescuing guards, OC Communications, & OCEMS was amazing. Every action that took place, had to happen exactly as it did that day, to give all involved a chance for survival which is why we train and prepare constantly.

A second tragic event took place that same day after the Beach patrol had cleared the ocean and gone off-duty for the day. It started with a 911 call for a swimmer in distress but ended with an unconscious person offshore on 9th St.

A lesson learned and re-learned every year.... during the both the season and the off season do your best to promote water respect and safety. Please, remind all visitors to use common sense, know their own abilities, never swim without lifeguards and talk to the lifeguard before entering the water.

Update: The Weingard / Bean compound on Somerset St. is slated to be torn down and converted into public parking prior to next summer. However, the units at 105 Dorchester St. have one more season of employee housing. The Terri-A-While will remain as employee housing in the future.

To former and current employees and friends of the OCBP, please have a safe and enjoyable winter. Sea you in the spring.



Ocean City's Aquatic Spinal Injuries and Getting to Answers

Submitted by Jamie Falcon

At last, I am near the completion of my dissertation. The title is "Evaluating Near Shore Spinal Injuries and Alternatives to Reduce their Occurrence." The data I am analyzing come from our incident reports. This project has been possible only due to the SRTs', Crew Chiefs' and Officers' careful completion of paperwork. Without Captain Arbin's insistence on this and his attention to the collection of the paperwork, I wouldn't be able to do this project and we, and coastal resort policymakers everywhere, would be without the illumination these data provide.

I first thought of this project in 2003. I had been a Navy Rescue Swimmer and a Quartermaster. Due to the former, I became a lifeguard in Ocean City while in college. Due to the latter, I was familiar with nautical charts. While at the University of Delaware earning my Masters in Economics, I looked at a chart of the water in front of Ocean City and began to not only hypothesize about possible causal relationships with aquatic spinal injuries, but to develop the statistical tools to assess the potential relationships. Finally, I have results (and they are not written here).

Ocean City is a great case study for this problem, which is a world-wide problem, because our resort is high volume, the beach varies in shape as result of a number of variables all of which I have data for, and the Beach Patrol does a great job of documenting incidents. My long-term hope is to do this type of analysis for other resorts. The policy alternatives that emerge for Ocean City should fit well elsewhere but I would enjoy confirming that by analyzing other resorts' data.

What I am sharing below is NOT my results. What is below took a few hours to put together; I've been working on this project for eleven years and what it takes to detect a causal relationship is much, much more sophisticated than a number of events per year. Below are some background statistics only. Following these is the conceptual model my committee and I used to develop our models. We are estimating two models. One is the "severity" model. The outcomes the categories "refusal," "transport by ambulance," and "medevaced or administered CPR." The model includes eighteen variables that may contribute to severity. The second model is the "count" model. The outcome is the number of incidents in day given the conditions and estimated population. Twelve variables contribute to the count per day. For most days, that outcome is zero and all of the data had to be collected for each day including those.

The conceptual model below makes it clear that simply inferring from one casually observed event and one casually observed outcome does not explain a relationship.

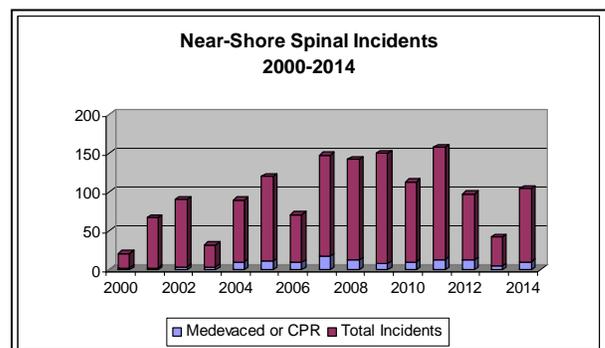
A number of people have expressed interest and support of this project. I really appreciate that. My committee and I are now doing "sensitivity analysis." This is necessary to see what might affect our results. For example, if we fail to consider how many visitors the Town had would it affect the significance of wave height or would the failure to account for water temperature affect the significance of our safety seminars? Until I have tested possibilities like this, I ought not present my results; it is better to be accurate and credible than to be hasty.

There is little to nothing about causation that can be inferred from the number of incidents or severe incidents per

year. I know a number of people thought of this past season as being especially dangerous in terms of spinal injuries. But, the number of severe injuries was exactly the median of the past fifteen years (in fact lower than that of the past decade). This table and chart should merely remind us how important our job is. Keep up the good work on the beach and on the paperwork.

Captain's Note: As a result of our professionalism and consistency in maintaining accurate and complete data, we have often been involved in scientific research that deals with oceanographic activities and incidents. In recent years there has been speculation at other ocean resorts that there is a direct correlation between beach maintenance projects and the severity and frequency of both head/neck injuries and rip currents. Since we have long-term data we can look at information over time and there is no statistical correlation between beach maintenance initiatives in Ocean City, Maryland and injuries or incidents. As a response to a specific inquiry the City Engineer wrote a response and we have re-printed it in this newsletter on page 15.

Year	Medevac or CPR	Total Neck-Backs	Percent Medevaced or CPR
2000	2	19	10.5%
2001	2	65	3.1%
2002	4	87	4.6%
2003	4	28	14.3%
2004	10	80	12.5%
2005	11	109	10.1%
2006	9	62	14.5%
2007	17	131	13.0%
2008	12	130	9.2%
2009	8	142	5.6%
2010	10	103	9.7%
2011	13	145	9.0%
2012	12	86	14.0%
2013	5	37	13.5%
2014	10	95	10.5%
Total	129	1319	9.8%
Average	8.6	87.9	9.8%
Median	10	87	11.5%
10 Year Average	10.7	104	10.3%
10 Year Median	10.5	106	9.9%



OCBP NEWS

Vehicles Coming to Beach Patrol for 2015

submitted by: Lt. Ward Kovacs

As we have for the past ten years, we will be requesting three new Honda ATVs for 2015, along with one new Jet Ski. These have already been approved in the budget, and should be ordered by April. We are also receiving a replacement pickup truck from Public Works. It has been a single driver vehicle and is in great shape. Former OCVFV Chief Roger Steger is the current driver, and he was busy cleaning the inside of the truck windows when I went to look it over. This truck will replace pickup 605 (the one with the chewed up steering wheel and squeaking belts). Also being transferred to us is a Suburban that was used by the Fire Marshall's office. It has a lot of miles on it, but they were highway miles, unlike 607, which it will replace.

Captain's Note: This year's budget request for the three ATVs includes an upgrade to an automatic transmission which should save some skin on our drivers' left feet.

Fall Guarding and Extended Coverage

submitted by: Lt. Ward Kovacs

It was a busier than average late season in 2014. We had several busy rescue days due to the great weather and the warm water temperatures. There were days in September, and even October that looked like typical mid-summer days, judging by beach population. Sergeant Uebel was first on the scene with a CPR in progress on a boardwalk-level patio. Kevin Johnson also responded to assist. Paramedics on the scene told me later; "your guys were on it!" As we pulled stands off the beach on September 22nd, the first day of extended coverage, we made five rescues. That is more rescues than we made in all the prior years we have had mobile patrols, combined. We ran extended coverage a little different than we have the past few years. Instead of having beach patrols and stand painting crews, we had people from each stand painting crew designated as responders each day. Crew Chief Dave Haight led the 65th Street crew, and Sgt. Uebel ran the south painting crew. All of the painting went well, and the crews finished on time despite a few rainy periods. Painters were called to check out possible swimmers in distress on three occasions, and made one rescue after responding from 65th Street. Stands are in good shape, with the majority being stored inside at the former recycling center. We had less than average stand damage in 2014 and are in great shape looking forward to 2015.

Captain's Note: Beach coverage is far more difficult starting after the third week in August and I want to personally thank all of the staff who were able to continue working as well as any who made the weekend trips back to the beach to help out our number of stands deployed on the beach. Working weekends



often means that our staff is working seven days each week with no days off and we appreciate that commitment to our mission. We began our new "Thank You Thursday" Facebook postings with a letter that was sent to both the Mayor and Beach Patrol with a very emotional message from a father, who along with his son, was rescued by one of our mobile patrol units.

Junior Beach Patrol

submitted by: Lt. Ward Kovacs

The Junior Beach Patrol enjoyed another record year in 2014. Almost every session was filled, and there was a nice distribution among the different levels. Crew Chief Bryan Clark did a great job taking over "Day 1" as day leader as Jennelle Irwin moved on to her career with Worcester County. Again, several Assistant Instructors came out of Academy and passed their qualification test in times that would qualify them to be SRTs. JBPAI Chris Monteferrante later passed the PEPSE that qualifies him to enter next year's Academy as a PSRT. Following last summer, day leaders got together to develop some new competitions in order to keep the program fresh and new for the JBP members who return year after year, and week after week. Some of these changes could be seen during the Friday competition with the obstacle course taking on a different look on a weekly basis. Things are already starting to take shape for next year, as seven 2014 JBP crew chiefs have already tested to be Assistant Instructors for 2015. Of these, one candidate attended three back-to-back sessions until he earned the scores he wanted on his evaluation, and he did, improving each week. When our JBP team was at the Rehoboth Beach JBP competition this year, they had the opportunity to try out several different paddle boards designed for young paddlers. They picked one particular style as their favorite. As our older boards are ready to be replaced, I ordered and received two new boards in the style the JBP members selected for its combination of speed and stability.



OCBP Webpage – A Team Effort

Submitted by: Kristin Joson

The Town of Ocean City has two websites that have been around for several years. One of the websites that was redesigned about five years ago is the OC tourism site www.ococean.com. The purpose of this site is to promote Ocean City as a tourist destination and to list events and accommodations for potential vacationers.

The second website for the Town of Ocean City is the official Town of OC government website of which the Beach Patrol is a part. This site houses all town departments including Emergency Services, the department that the Beach Patrol is a Division of. Our lifeguard stands and much of our safety information still has the original url. www.ococean.com/ocbp. When people go to this site they will be forwarded to www.oceancitymd.gov.

This website provides one location for people to find information on anything that involves the Town of Ocean City government operations. The site has a common look among all the agencies in Ocean City. Keeping the Beach Patrol presence on the web is a team effort. I work closely with Bill Funkhouser, the web designer for the Ocean City government website to keep our content and information current.

The Beach Patrol portion serves two main audiences, the general public and Beach Patrol employees. The general public typically is interested in safety, jobs, staff, training, news, Jr. Beach Patrol, press releases, competitions, frequently asked questions, Beach Patrol information, newsletters, history, surfing beaches and the newly added “Beach Conditions for the Day”. This has been very popular. People can see all the beach conditions at a glance (Current conditions, buoy report, lifeguard stand locations, weather, marine forecast, tides, and surfing beach locations). Sgt. Ben Davis deserves the credit for working with Bill Funkhouser to create this daily re-occurring application on our homepage.

Also on the home page, is a section titled, “Employee Links”. Here Beach Patrol employees are typically interested in the employee email link, forms, calendar, semaphore alphabet, USLA Chapter info, weekly bulletins, and OCBP triathlon information. OCBP employees might also be interested in our official OCBP Facebook page. There are many Beach Patrol Facebook pages that individuals have created, mostly by OCBP alumni. However, our official Beach Patrol Facebook page can be recognized by our official logo with the red buckles. There is a place on the Beach Patrol website right under the daily surf beach schedule where you can “Like” the Beach Patrol Facebook page and become a member. I encourage all of you to do that if you are on Facebook. We are constantly posting updates about the Beach Patrol and the activities that are going on. This is also a place where pictures are posted and of course keeping our mission always in the forefront, a safety message is always included.

I continue to work with Captain Arbin and Bill Funkhouser to keep all of our employee resources such as forms and the calen-

dar current. Once the season begins and Stella starts the weekly bulletins they will also be uploaded to the site. One of the most extensive and highly visited areas of our website deals with employment and testing. 98% of individuals who register to take a P.E.P.S.E. indicate that they learned about the Ocean City Beach Patrol by visiting our website. As you can see our website is a team effort with many people contributing. If you have any ideas on what should be included, please feel free to let me know. Our website evolves each year under the guidance and expertise of Bill and it is my hope to continue to add to the website to address public education so it can continue to be recognized worldwide as a comprehensive site for water safety.

Awards Ceremony Winners 2014

submitted by: Lt. Mike Stone

PSRT's & SRT's of the Year

South

PSRT – Sam Deely

SRT – Antoine Villeneuve-Lavoie

Middle South

PSRT – Cameron Shaw

SRT - Dustin Whittles

Middle North

PSRT - Dylan Whittles

SRT - AJ Smith

North

PSRT – Charles “CJ” LaCasse

SRT - Paul Vassalotti

2014 Iron-guard (hours)

JPBAI – Chris Monteferrante

SBF – Andrea Vassalotti

PSRT – Charles “CJ” LaCasse

PT-PSRT – Dan Pogonowski

SRT – Claudine Courteau-Godmaire

ACC – Karlee Zywasuko

CC – Dave Haight

Sgt. – Tim Uebel

Awards Ceremony Favor

submitted by: Lt. Mike Stone

Lt. Stone had personalized OCBP Lanyards reading “Summer 2014” made for everyone who worked this past summer. If you did not attend the Awards Ceremony and dinner and would like yours, please see Lt. Stone the next time you are in town. The cost is \$5.00 each and they will be available at base and at meetings next summer. If you attended the Awards Ceremony, the cost of the Lanyards was included. Please let Lt. Stone know if you have any suggestions for future favors!



Educating the Public

Submitted by: Kristin Joson

Every SRT knows educating the public is one of the three major focuses of the Beach Patrol's mission. In the opinion of the most experienced Beach Patrol leadership, it is the component that provides the greatest impact. When most people think about the OCBP lifeguards, they picture them manning their tall, white stands, sending semaphore, blowing their whistles, running down the beach with orange rescue buoys or swimming out to make rescues. Although all of these activities are important parts of our three-part mission, which is: education, prevention and intervention (making rescues and providing medical assistance), the Beach Patrol spends the majority of its time and efforts on the first aspect of this mission which is education. We know that an educated beach patron is a safe beach patron and this emphasis is one thing that separates the Ocean City Beach Patrol from other beach patrols around the world, and the public lets us know that they notice this difference.

The Ocean City Beach Patrol has been in existence for over eighty years, however, it is only during the past fifteen years that the education portion of our mission has become such a great focus. This emphasis on education directly supports the prevention aspect of our mission, which in turn reduces the number of rescues we need to make. The Beach Patrol has developed and employed several strategies aimed at educating the public to potential dangers at the beach. These efforts are not restricted to Ocean City or our summer season. Our personnel take the beach safety message "on the road" on a year-round basis and work with all types of groups from pre-schools to senior citizens with a single goal, to pass on information to help people safely enjoy their time in and around the water. I personally spend a lot of my work time with the Beach Patrol developing relationships and partnerships with other organizations and agencies to help promote our safety campaign.

To support our efforts, the Beach Patrol has generated and distributed literature and provided information through the media and directly to the public regarding rip currents, shallow water diving, dangerous shorebreak, digging holes in the sand, and many other hazards. This information comes in various forms and through many outlets. You can't go many places or pick up any tourist publication in Ocean City without seeing our slogan; "Keep your feet in the sand until the lifeguard's in the stand". Our most recent phrase that we have been publishing any chance we get is to have the public check in with the lifeguard each time they visit the beach to ask about current conditions. Our lifeguards are friendly and informed. All employees receive training in the delivery of our safety messages, and we continue to communicate this message to the public.

The Ocean City Beach Patrol continues to work with other organizations such as Sea Grant, National Institute of Health (NIH), National Aquarium, Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMSS), Johns Hopkins University, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). We have assisted NOAA in developing the method used to predict rip current activity and we provide current data each day that assists the agency in making those forecasts. In

fact, during our guarding season, we report rip current conditions three times each day to NOAA and host a face to face meeting at the beginning of each season to discuss the program and its impact. Last year's meeting focused on the development of a rip current data input website to assist NOAA in the collection of real time data to influence the daily predictions. This past summer we hosted, Dr. Rob Brander from the University of New South Wales in Sydney, NSW, Australia, better known as Dr. Rip. He was at the beginning of a several month tour of beaches around the world and specifically requested the opportunity to visit Ocean City and meet with Beach Patrol leaders to discuss our multi-faceted approach to public education that he believes is a model approach that should be adopted, in some form, world-wide. While visiting our beach, he co-presented on the beach with CC Liz Vander Clute to a group that was visiting from Jamaica. Although, Dr. Rip was already impressed with the OCBP from our international reputation, he was even more impressed with his firsthand observations. In his travels and visits with beach patrols all over the world he credits the OCBP with having the best public education campaign.

Our safety presentations started about fifteen years ago with the weekly beach safety presentations. Every Sunday morning, in at least seventeen different locations along the entire Ocean City shoreline, beach patrons can listen to a beach safety presentation given by members of the OCBP and receive safety related give-aways. We continued our recently developed partnership with Peninsula Regional Medical Center to help get our safety messages out. They supplied us with waterproof first aid kits to distribute at our safety presentations with our slogan, "Keep your feet in the sand until the lifeguard's in the stand". These first aid kits are a popular give-away at our presentations, along with the sunscreen samples that were provided by our long-time sponsor, Panama Jack. The public is encouraged to call our headquarters at 410-289-7556 for times and locations of these presentations during the season. These presentations have become an integral part of educating the public. Every Sunday thousands of beach patrons come and see presentations and get the latest information about ocean safety, the Beach Patrol, and Ocean City itself. The OCBP also will provide presentations for any group that plans to come to the beach. All they need to do is contact the Beach Patrol and we can schedule the presentation on the beach as well as provide a sectioned off area, dedicated staff and give-a-ways for your group.

Our lifeguards also frequently do what we call "EDUs". This is the semaphore abbreviation for "Education". An EDU is when a lifeguard recognizes a potential hazard or dangerous circumstance (rip current, heavy surf, etc.) and gets a group of beach patrons together to warn them about the hazard. The idea is that if the public is well informed they will make better decisions, which will result in a safer beach environment for everyone. Each SRT is trained in public speaking and presenting EDUs during the required 65-hour Surf Rescue Academy. We also provide advanced training in public education that is required for promotion in our organization to assure that our Surf Rescue Technicians are delivering specific, targeted educational programs.

We are always looking for opportunities to get our safety message out and continue to work with our local partners in educa-

tion. The fall and winter seasons are no exception. The Beach Patrol accepts many invitations to appear at public events. Lt. Kovacs and Captain Arbin continue to meet with various groups to provide beach safety presentations. I spend the off season time planning and preparing for the upcoming season and keep our current partners in education in the loop and on-board for the upcoming season.

As the Beach Patrol has increased its efforts to educate the public we have seen the results pay off. We have noticed a well-informed public that understands rip currents and other dangers in the ocean. Establishing and maintaining these partnerships has become a key to our success.

We collect data each season. When looking at the data, we have seen a steady decrease in the types of incidents that are addressed in our educational programs, reinforcing the value of this aspect of our mission. However, the greatest benefit that I have seen is the tremendous decrease in the number of people entering the ocean when we are off duty and the substantial reduction in off duty responses and deaths. This is a positive indication that our "Keep your feet in the sand....." message is having the desired affect. More recently our suggestion for family's to introduce themselves to "their lifeguard" has resulted in a substantial reduction in lost and found individuals (over a 50% reduction). The Ocean City Beach Patrol would like to thank the following businesses/publications for continuing the partnership effort to educate in order to save lives by getting our safety messages out to the masses:

The Dispatch – Sgt. Ryan Cowder's weekly safety tip

Ocean City Today – Kristin Joson's weekly safety message

Worcester County Times - Question of the Week – lifeguard profile and tip

The Daily Times – current news

Inside Ocean City – safety information distributed in hotels in Ocean City

Landmarks – safety messages and information distributed regionally

Peninsula Regional Medical Center- first aid kits

OceanCity.com – current safety information

The SeaBoard - timely and informative safety messages

The Lucky Surf Shop – supporting our lifeguards and promoting beach safety in Gold Coast Mall

Atlantic General Hospital – Beach Safety tip bookmarks

Quiet Storm Surf Shop – Sponsoring our annual Crew Comps and public exhibition on Beach Patrol appreciation day

Friends of the OCBP—newly formed group



Loss of Housing at 110 Somerset

Submitted by: Lt. Ward Kovacs

The good news is that the Tarry-A-While housing for 15 Beach Patrol employees will be available into the foreseeable future. Additional housing in the two buildings directly east of our current headquarters building will also be available for the summer of 2015, although their future beyond this summer is not certain. They will eventually yield way for a long anticipated "Model Block" project at some point. The bad news is that we will lose 110 Somerset and its nine beds, along with Brent's apartment below before the summer of 2015. The buildings along Somerset will be razed in order to create parking spaces around the same time that our current headquarters complex is leveled. This is all part of the arrangement that was made between the city and OCDC in order to pave the way for our new headquarters building.



Progress is being made daily, This picture was taken in late November.

Beach Patrol Equipment Shut Down 2014

submitted by: Sgt. Colby Phillips

This fall's equipment shut down went very well. We were able to get all the uniforms and raingear cleaned, buoys, first aid supplies etc inventoried and put away in less than a week's overall time. I received over 4 dozen new red sweats and 2 dozen crew chief sweats that will be ready for distribution if needed next summer. Also new red windbreakers were received. I would love some feedback in regards to the female swimsuits we tried out this year or any other suggestions you think might benefit the patrol equipment wise. Email me at colby9115ocbp@gmail.com

Happy Holidays everyone!!!
Colby, Unit 15



Local News

New Headquarters

submitted by: Lt. Ward Kovacs

Last Winter I had to listen to a lot of construction noise from across Dorchester Street as the new Fat Daddy's building was under construction. It was fairly loud at some times, and annoying at other times. There was a lot of banging as steel beams were put in place, and constant beeping as trucks and other equipment backed up to the site. This winter, I hear the same noises, but it is more like music to my ears than an annoyance as I watch our new Headquarters rising from the ground on the lot across the street. Currently, the first floor concrete has been poured in what will be our garage and equipment rooms, and also in the Police Department's bike locker. The block walls are starting to go up, and at least a few of the door frames are being set into place. Captain Arbin recently met with the Lieutenants to determine what electrical and network fixtures were needed in each room. Director Theobald met with an interior designer to select interior colors. Due to the good weather we've had in Ocean City, the project is currently on schedule. Let's hope that it stays that way through the winter!

Captain's Note: This is a very exciting time for the Beach Patrol and the Ocean City community. The new headquarters building will be a fitting landmark as people enter the downtown area and will serve as an enhancement to the neighborhood. Although the majority of the project should be nearing completion as we begin the 2015 season, I am hoping to issue equipment from our current headquarters so that the majority of our equipment will be out so that we will not have to move it. Then once moved we can operate during the season from our new building and have equipment returned to the new facility at the conclusion of the 2015 season.



Off-season Activities

Over the line!

submitted by: Sgt. Mark Mueller

The unofficial beach patrol bowling team is back on the lanes for another exciting season. This year the team voted on the Wolverines as this season's team name. After a less than desirable start to the season, the Wolverines have been hitting the mark this fall, going undefeated in the past two weeks and winning 11 of the past 12 games. Jake Foy returns as the team's lead off bowler, destroying the pins with his suitcase style delivery. Newcomer Adam Payne has been a pleasant surprise to the team, contributing in all frames during his rookie season. Jeff Brabitz returns full time this season, rolling in the third spot. He will continue in that position until he is called off for baby duty in the spring. Mark Muller returns to the fourth spot, rolling with his Jason Belmonte style. Unfortunately our seasoned anchor bowler, Randy Weaver, succumbed to a serious injury and will be unable to return this season. Our thoughts and prayers are with him as we hope for a speedy and full recovery. Rolling in his place is OCBP alumnus Brad Smith who has been stepping up to fill the big shoes vacated by Randy. Coming off the bench, Damian Sanzotti has been an asset to the team in his rookie season. The last roster position is filled by Joe Beran. Joe is known to some as Bean and works for vehicle maintenance for the town of Ocean City. The Wolverines have high hopes for a championship season. Mark it 8 dude!

Captain's Note: Although this may not seem to be part of our mission, it is why we call it the Beach Patrol family and it is this attribute of our organization that keeps people coming back for many years. It is no accident that over 1/3 of our 200 employees have returned for 5 or more years even though 85% do not live locally. There are several groups of Alumni that have remained lifelong friends after only one or two years on the Patrol. These relationships have lasted into their 70's, 80's and even 90's. The Ocean City Beach Patrol remains the "Adventure of a Lifetime".



Information on Ocean City's Beach Replenishment

By: Terence J. McGean, P.E. , City Engineer

Beach replenishment has been occurring in Ocean City since 1988. The project is designed by experts in Coastal Hydrology and Morphology. Everything from the grain size of the sand material placed on the beach to the shape of the beach profile both immediately after dredging and after mid and long term wave action is carefully calculated, modeled and monitored to ensure that the design closely matches the natural beach. The project has successfully protected Ocean City from over \$700 million dollars in storm damages and incalculable loss of life from ocean flooding.

Rip currents occur when high wave energy pushes water across a sand bar and the sand bar then breaches along a narrow location. Typically sand bars form in Ocean City over the winter during storm events with high waves with short periods (the period is the time between waves). During the spring and early summer these sand bars migrate back towards the beach eventually re-attaching to the beach itself. (see attached figure A). This dynamic process occurs with or without beach replenishment. It is usually most visible during the spring when tidal pools form along our beach. This is the result of the sand bar beginning to re-attach to the beach creating a low point that forms the tidal pool. The volume and speed of the sandbar migration will vary based on many factors including wave energy,

wave shape, wave directions, near shore topography, and other factors having little or nothing to do with beach replenishment. The formation of rip currents is most often associated with either high-pressure on-shore winds or tropical storms occurring well offshore in the Atlantic basin. These winds are generally not associated with local storm events but instead occur during sunny pleasant days. This weather pattern was very prevalent along the mid-Atlantic coast this year.

Our Beach Patrol has studied the possible correlation of beach rescues and beach replenishment projects in Ocean City. They have found NO connection. Despite what you may have seen on television or heard through social media there is no scientific study relating rip currents to beach replenishment projects. Most of the social media statements I have read claim that beach replenishment prevented the formation of sand bars, yet rip currents do not occur without a sand bar so this argument is contradictory to the actual facts.

Whenever the Army Corps of Engineers designs a beach replenishment project, there are certain areas of the beach that, due to very low erosion, do not need any sand fill. You may see pipe or equipment traversing these areas, but no sand is pumped there. Of the five unfortunate drowning fatalities that occurred this year in Ocean City, four of them occurred at locations that had NOT been replenished (137th, Inlet beach, 19th Street, & 9th Street) while one occurred at a replenished beach. There was also a fatality and numerous reports of rip currents on Assateague Island, which is not replenished.

Summer vs Winter

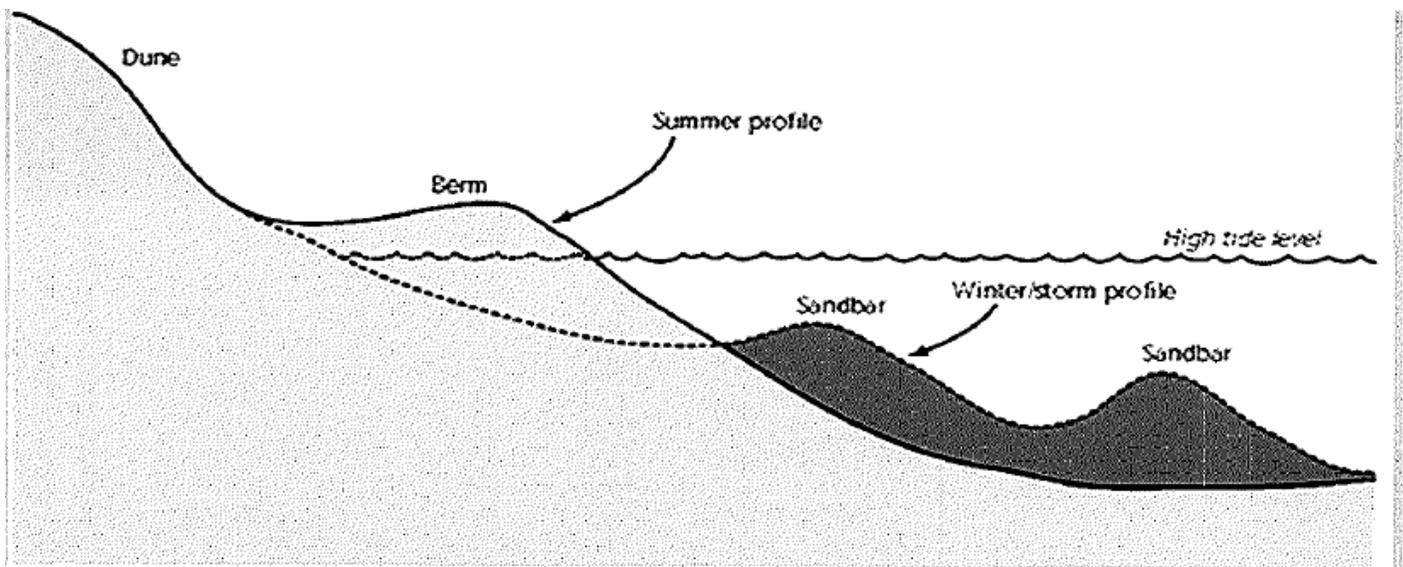


Figure A: Typical summer and winter beach and dune profiles.

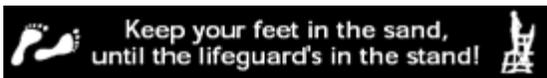


OCEAN CITY BEACH PATROL

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109 Dorchester Street
Ocean City, MD 21842

For winter correspondence
please send to:
Town of Ocean City
PO box 158
Ocean City, MD 21843
Attention: Beach Patrol

Email: barbin@ococean.com



Calendar/Important Dates

- December 6– 13** Beach Patrol Budget Preparation
- December 26-31** Beach Patrol Budget Presentation to Director
- January 1** Penguin Plunge, Mayor's Open House
- February 28** off -site York PA PEPSE
- March 7-8** Strategic Planning Weekend
- April 2** Mailing of Spring Newsletter
- April 24**—Employee Agreements due back
- May 16– 17** CC paper work, Officer's Work weekend
- May 9—16** Opening Set up
- May 17—24** SRA I
- May 17—22** Returning Drug Test
- May 20—22** Paper work Equipment pick up for veterans
- May 23** 7:00 am Prayer Service and First Day Guarding
- June 6** - Pre-Employment Ocean Test

For a complete, up- to- date 16 month calendar click on the Employee Calendar link on the home page of the Beach Patrol website

OCBP WEB www.ococean.com/ocbp

Do You Want OCBP License Plates?

If you do, you must complete the following:

- Obtain an application by requesting one
- Complete the application form with vehicle information and owner information
- Sign the application and send a check for \$50.00 back to Headquarters
- The Captain must sign off on approval and mail to the MVA.



Important, Important!!!!

- In order to insure your W2 and your tax refund get to you, contact City Hall with any corrections on your permanent address.
- Also contact Debi if your phone number, mailing address or email address changes. DebiOCBP@aol.com
- You should contact or cc Kristin with your email address change so she can keep the website updated and current.

The mission of the Ocean City Beach Patrol is to provide for the safety and well-being of the beach patrons of the Town of Ocean City, Maryland, who participate in beach and ocean-related activities. This mission includes **educating** the public, **preventing** potential accidents, and **intervening** when necessary and appropriate, both on the beach and in the adjacent Atlantic Ocean waters. The Patrol intends to fulfill its mission by:

- Recruiting the most highly qualified candidates.
- Employing qualified individuals for administrative and educational positions, competent surf rescue technicians, and public-minded surfing beach facilitators.
- Training personnel with the most current information, technology and equipment.
- Outfitting personnel with current, well-maintained, and appropriate equipment.
- Upholding the highest standards of professionalism; to present knowledgeable, capable, and reliable Surf Rescue Technicians to the general public.